

VZCZCXRO6382
RR RUEHBZ RUEH DU RUEHGI RUEHJO RUEHMA RUEHMR RUEHPA RUEHRN RUEHTRO
DE RUEHDS #1911 2181304
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 061304Z AUG 09
FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 5800
INFO RUEHZO/AFRICAN UNION COLLECTIVE
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 0024
RUEPADJ/CJTF HOA
RUEKDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC
RUEWMFD/HQ USAFRICOM STUTTGART GE
RHEHAAA/NSC WASHDC

UNCLAS ADDIS ABABA 001911

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

STATE FOR AF/FO, AF/RSA, AF/W, AND WHA
STATE ALSO FOR INL/AE AND INL/LP
NSC FOR MGAVIN

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [PREL](#) [SNAR](#) [XR](#) [AU](#)
SUBJECT: AFRICAN UNION WANTS TO COMBAT DRUG TRAFFIC
TRANSITING WEST AFRICA

¶1. (U) This cable contains an Action Request. See paragraph ¶5.

¶2. (SBU) The African Union Commission wants to be a partner with the United States and others who are fighting the drug traffic that originates in South America, transits West Africa, and ends up on the streets of Europe. The AU is not only concerned about the effect these drugs are having on consumers in Europe, it also fears the drug traffic will transform fragile West African governments into narco-states and will bring with it an increase in illicit drug usage on the African continent.

¶3. (SBU) AU Commission Chairperson Jean Ping discussed the issue of drug trafficking in West Africa during a meeting he had with Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Johnnie Carson on the margins of the AU Summit in Sirte, Libya in early July. Carson sought AU cooperation in apprehending suspected traffickers so that they could be investigated and prosecuted. It is not enough for African states to detain suspects and return them to South America, Carson told Ping. Ping agreed that Africa could do more to stop the illicit drug traffic emanating from South America and transiting through West Africa. AU officials have told us that the Commission and AU member states want to be of assistance, but they do not have the financial capacity and the expertise to effectively address this problem.

¶4. (SBU) Ping's Chief of Staff, Ambassador John Shinkaiye, followed up with USAU Charge by requesting additional information on the West African drug trafficking problem. USAU provided the AU Commission with copies of the testimony on this issue given by USG officials before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on African Affairs on June 23. Shinkaiye sought more specific information on the drug trafficking phenomenon in West Africa during a meeting on August 5.

¶5. (SBU) Action Request: USAU seeks the Department's assistance in obtaining the following information for the AU: estimated volume of drug traffic originating in South America and transiting West Africa, types of drugs being trafficked, and trafficking methods. In addition, the AU is keen to receive practical proposals about what Africa can do to combat the drug trafficking problem. Armed with this data and recommendations, the AU intends to craft an action plan for adoption at the Africa-South American Summit tentatively scheduled to take place in Caracas, Venezuela on September 26-27.

GONZALES